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AUTHOR Della-Piana, Gabriel M.; And Others
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ABSTRACT

This report first presents a brief analysis of the "Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing" that provides the basis for an argument that the test user/purchaser must see the possibilities in uncommon types of assessment before any test developer/publisher is likely to make them available. Next, six criteria (theoretical base, achievability, transfer, importance, intercoder agreement, and economy) guiding the development of a framework for the analysis of reader: writer conferencing are sketched out in a way that reveals why it may be seen as a plausible and important alternative assessment to complement direct product assessment of writing. Then, a framework for the analysis of reader: writer conferencing is briefly described along with data on intercoder agreements. The report then illustrates two approaches to portrayal, the conferencing transcript (between an elementary school teacher and a prospective elementary school teacher) and a graphic plus episodic representation, in order to determine "what is externalized" by the analysis of one-to-one conferencing. The report's conclusion--that the analysis of one-to-one conferencing between teacher and student, focusing on a draft of the student's writing, externalizes a number of variables that are elements of conferencing performance and that constitute or influence writing accomplishment--is then presented along with some implications for future research. (Two tables of data are included, and two conferencing transcripts and 40 references are appended.) (MS)

# What Assessment of Reader-Writer Conferencing Can Externalize

Gabriel M. Della-Piana, Robert Downing, and Dian Morrison
University of Utah

Marjorie Coombs
Salt Lake City School District



It has been observed that educational outcomes are "unpredictable like the weather" (Glass, 1979) and may thus be treated in the same way. The argument runs as follows: We know many of the variables that influence educational accomplishments. The problem is that the variables show up in diverse and unexpected combinations in any given context. This makes prediction a moment-to-moment-in-context affair. The only recourse this leaves the educator is to monitor the known variables on a regular basis and to be prepared for changing one's plans. Corno and Snow (1986) have termed these moment-to-moment decisions by a teacher, "microadaptations to individual differences among students". Discovering practical taxonomies of aptitude and instructional variables that are specific to an educational context is seen as a major task for research on adaptive insturction (Corno and Snow, 1986). The one-to-one reader:writer conference (teacher:student, peer:student, or student:self) seems to the investigators to be a plausible candidate to provide an opportunity for discovering a practical taxonomy for the domain of classroom writing accomplishment, This report is a step in the direction of such discovery. It is the report of an immersion in the conferencing process of a few teachers as a way of sorting out some of the variables which constitute or influence writing accomplishment or instruction.

The paper proceeds as follows: First, a brief analysis of the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (APA, 1985) provides the basis for an argument that the test user/purchaser must see the possibilities in uncommon types of assessment before any test developer/publisher is likely to make them available. Second, six criteria guiding the development of a framework for the analysis of reader:writer conferencing are sketched out in a way that reveals why it may be seen as a plausible and important alternative assessment to complement direct product assessment of writing. Third, a framework for the analysis of reader:writer conferencing is briefly described along with data on intercoder agreements. Fourth, "what is externalized" by the analysis of one-to-one conferencing is illustrated by two approaches to portrayal: the conferencing transcript and a graphic plus episodic representation. Finally, some implications for further research are sketched out.

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## The Joint Committee Test Standards

Specifying a domain of accomplishment for the development of achievement tests requires the identification of "significant" or "educationally important" skills, content, or outcomes (Baker, 1974, p. 20; Cronbach, 1971, p.446; and Yalow and Popham, 1983, p.14). It follows that in order to identify important outcomes one must consider alternative domains of accomplishment and select one or more domains on the basis of some criteria of importance. However, two conditions make it unlikely that test developers/publishers will provide the test user with options for assessment based on consideration of alternative domain specifications. First, the task of specifying alternative domains of importance and deciding which is most important for specific uses and interpretations is extremely costly and complex (Linn, 1983; Messick 1975, 1980, 1987). Secondly, what compounds the problem is that in the current professional standards for test development (APA, 1985; Joint Committee on Testing Practices, 1988) there is no formal requirement for the test developer/publisher to consider alternative domains of accomplishment, nor to describe competing domains that were not considered, nor even to provide a caution for the user that the domain selected is not the only conceivable choice for the subject matter (Della-Piana, 1988). The consequence for the test user is to be left with little help from the developer/publisher in obtaining some information critical to test selection and in developing options for alternative approaches to assessment.

One constructive response to this state of affairs is to conduct research that helps illuminate "the possibilities in uncommon types of tests". As one voice in the measurement community put it, "An industry with a large investment cannot move far ahead of its customers. Only if the next generation of test purchasers understands the possibilities in uncommon types of tests will someone be enterprising enough to supply them (Cronbach, 1984, p.12). The present paper is directed toward providing such understanding for one kind of assessment in the area of writing; viz., the assessment of one-to-one conferencing on early drafts of writing.

## Criteria for a Framework for the Analysis of One-to-One Reader:Writer Conferencing

The broad goal of our investigations is to 'understand the possibilities" of assessment of reader:writer conferencing so as to inform test development and test use in ways that are sensitive to the concerns of the teacher and student as test users in the schools. Six criteria guide the development of this assessment approach.

## A Theoretical Base

No single theory of conferencing will form the theoretical base for the Reader:Writer (RW) Conferencing Analysis Procedures. The observation that "most of us are not even aware that we are operating from one of a number of possible points of view" (Emig and Parker, 1976, p.10) and the assumption that there is as yet no empirically based prescriptive theory of conferencing, suggests that the theoretical base of the framework should be flexible enough to accommodate divergent perspectives. One way of accomplishing this aim is to include elements of conferencing recommended in the literature on conferencing practice and observed by investigators in a wide range of contexts and levels of expertise.

## Achievability

Domains of performance are specified to guide assessment "because we think somebody can accomplish them" (Hively, 1974, p.143). Thus, achievability is a criterion. The fact that variations in conferencing style representing different underlying educational purposes and values have been observed in actual contexts of practice (e.g., Calkins, 1983, 1986; Jacob, 1982; Reigstad, 1980) suggests that one is dealing with a variety of "achievable" domains. How broadly achievable in different populations or how susceptible to change through formal training, education, or self development is a matter for investigation.

## Transfer

Since one cannot teach toward nor assess all the achievable domains in any complex performance, transfer becomes a necessary criterion. Current achievement test development appears to pay little attention to a formal analysis of achievable domains of performance and selecting out and testing a subset that might generalize to others (See for example Popham, 1978, p. 118f, 161, 162). That the transfer criterion is a difficult one to apply in practice in the domain of writing is apparent from what data there is suggesting little promise of generalizability of performance across discourse modes (Appleby, 1984, pp. 582-584; Cooper and Matsuhashi, 1983, p. 4f; Quellmalz, 1984, pp. 29, 30; 1986, pp. 496, 497). The "process oriented domain" of reader:writer conferencing is assumed to have high potential for transfer across other domains of writing accomplishment. However, that is a matter for investigation.

Importance

If one looks for a subset of domains of performance that might generalize to other achievable domains one runs directly into the criterion of importance. There should be a specification of alternative domains of importance relevant to the specific uses of information or interpretations to be made from assessment data (Linn, 1983; Messick, 1975, p.262; 1980, p.1020; Rosenthal, 1983). Writers on literacy development have not neglected specification of broad alternative domains of accomplishment. Quellmalz (1986, p.493) identifies three alternative domains distinguished by a focus on discourse structures, functional writing required by personal and societal demands, and writing as a process of making meaning. Scribner (1986, pp. 7-22) discusses alternatives in terms of value choices entailed in three domains with different underlying metaphors: literacy as functional, socially empowering, and personally self ehancing. The selection of "RW conferencing" as an important domain of accomplishment to guide assessment and instruction is based on three assumptions: First, since ultimately as a writer one "conferences with oneself" to produce and polish a piece of work, then externalizing that process in relation to others (teacher, peers) has educational value (Calkins, 1983, Murray 1979, 1982). Second, the development of process assessment will allow the sorting out of roles and effects of process assessment and how it may complement the fast growing product assessment or direct assessment of writing (Educational Measurement, 1984). Third, assessment that externalizes ideational and motivational processes of the writer , interpersonal processes of the writer/teacher/peer, and characteristics of the writing itself, holds promise for providing an "educative context" (Shulman, 1984) for the teacher as well as for the student.

Intercoder Agreement

Since judgmental processes enter into the classification of statements from a one-to-one conferencing interaction, it is important that providing evidence on intercoder agreement be a development criterion. The level of agreement among coders (codings) should be appropriate to the specific interpretations or decisions to be made and should be specified with sources of variance identified.

Economy

Finally, all assessment has costs and selecting among alternative assessment approaches requires cost estimates in relation to the value of the expected or obtained information (Gilbert, 1978). Thus, economy of assessment (the ratio of cost to value) should be a development criterion. Cost estimates should be made based on time/cost for setting up, obtaining, scoring, portraying and interpreting of the conference interactions. We have not considered cost to be a criterion to reckon with seriously in the early stages of development. Until the possibilities of alternative assessment are understood (i.e., the kind and value of information that may be obtained) it is premature to attempt an estimate of the ratio of the cost to the value of the information.

## The Framework and Intercoder Agreements

The Framework.-- The framework for analysis of reader:writer conferencing was derived through both an inductive process (i.e., empirically grounded categories) and a deductive process (i.e., categories and relationships informed by practical conceptions of conferencing). The framework is a classification scheme that includes both reader response and writer response. Reader response is recorded in a matrix form. On one axis is reader response mode (questions, prescribes, explains, supports, describes, manages, associates). On the other axis is the focus of reader response including both a text-referenced focus (general; transcription and grammatical conventions; content and ideas; and discourse structure and style) and a writer-referenced focus (general; long term memory of plans, knowledge, and experience; concerns, persistence or motivation; and analysis /production of ideas or text). Writer response mode is classified in three categories as adapted from Jacob (1983): stock or categorical responses; elaborations or explanations; and questions, corrections, or disagreements. The matrix allows one to specify the percent of reader responses that fit each reader response mode, each focus of reader response, each intersection of reader response and focus of response, and the percentage of writer responses of each type that follow responses from a given reader response mode. Because of currently low intercoder agreement on the focus of reader response, these categories will not enter into the discussion in the present paper.

Intercoder Agreement.-- Intercoder agreement data was obtained on six transcripts by three raters. Agreement percentages for each category were calculated using the formula: Ai/Ai+D1i+D2i (Smith, Meux, Coombs, Eierdam and Szoke, 1970); where Ai equals

the number of agreements for category i, D1i equals the number of times coder 1 used category i when coder 2 did not use category i, and D2i equals the number of times coder 2 used category i when coder 1 did not use category i. Agreement percentages for conference totals were calculated with the formula: Ai/Ni where Ai equals the number of coder agreements for conference i, and Ni equals the total number of segments in conference i.

The "cell level" agreements (intersections of response mode and focus of response) are not presented in tabular form and are quite low. For example, 31 % of responses had total agreement among the three coders at the cell level and 44 % had agreement by two of the three coders. While this level of agreement suggests that the categories at the cell level could be useful for research purposes if they were clarified, the results at the present time will not be reported further nor will the categories be used in the analyses.

Our use of coded data in the analysis (e.g., graphic flow charts and episodic tables) is always based on consensus agreement. Yet, for research use some analysis of reasons for low points in intercoder agreements is called for.

There was minimal training for coders. One had been coding similar materials with a different system and simply read over the new category definitions and sample codings in the manual. Another coder was new to the subject matter and to coding and was walked through one transcript and did another independently prior to discussion of differences. Thus, one might expect better agreement with a more formal training program.

The obtained data on intercoder agreement suggest that the system is useful for portraying conferencing between coders. Intercoder agreement for reader response modes (totals for six conferences) ranged from a low of .42 to a high of .88. The lowest agreements on reader response modes were for the describes, explains, and prescribes categories. These low agreement levels suggest the need to increase the clarity of these categories and to improve coder training. Also, as discussed below, the basis for disagreements has been located and may be easily taken into account. The overall intercoder agreement for all conferences together is much higher. Conference intercoder agreement ranged from .61 to .89 with a total agreement for all conferences of .79.

Intercoder agreements have also been calculated for reader response focus and student/writer response mode. Conference total agreements for the focus of reader response are too low for current research use (median agreement of .55). We will work on refinement ofthese categories. The levels of agreement between

coders for student/writer response mode is very high (.63 to 1.00) with three conferences out of six having perfect agreement. For purposes of graphic portrayal and episodic representation, the agreement on writer response is clearly sufficient.

There were six major reasons for intercoder disagreements (these generally pertain to coding reader response mode). A brief listing here provides a description of some of the confusions which will be taken into account when revising the coding procedures and training. A comprehensive manual is currently under revision.

1. Statements were sometimes not segmented down to the smallest unit and thus were ambiguously "double barrelled". For example:

> But I think I would have added more... you know... and was someone lying next to you... in your dream?

The statement up to "added more" is a prescription telling the writer how to revise his paper. The remainder is a question asking for clarification. Together the segments cannot be classified as a single entity and is thus problematic for interrater coding.

2. Statements were sometimes classified in terms of presumed effect when the form was clearly something else. For example, an "explanation" that seemed "supportive". Thus:

> It made me want to read on and find out what happened.

What is explained is that "It" (in this case the start of the story) had the effect of "making me want to read on". In other words, this condition had this effect. But because the effect seemed positive, one may be moved to call it supportive as one rater did. This kind of ambiguity points up the complexity and arbitrariness involved in developing a coding system to represent verbal interaction.

3. Statements were sometimes classified in isolation when considering the context would change the meaning. For example:

> And then it says, "I was crying or not". Was I crying or not?

This certainly looks like a clear case of a question. However, the teacher (drawing on her background as a drama instructor) preceded this response with a suggestion to "bring out" in the writing something that the writer talked about in the conference

... also suggested that the writer bring in "the fear" that led to immobilization in the situation being described. As the teacher put it, "I want to feel your frustration of not knowing what you wanted to do". Then, at this point, the statement on crying was brought in, not to get an answer (indeed the teacher did not wait for one), but as an example of what needs to be clarified to complete the "staging" of the situation. Thus, it is part of a multistage prescription for the writer to follow when thinking about or revising his paper.

4. Statements were sometimes classified based on punctuation, when the rhetorical intent, effect, or form were otherwise. It will be recalled that these were transcriptions from audiotapes and the "intonation pattern" guided the transcriber in putting in the punctuation. For example:

> Okay. If... clarify that part about Mrs. B, then that means everything else here happened in kindergarten. Right?

The "Right?" is clearly not intended to provoke elaboration or even an agreement/disagreement. This is a statement that explains. If you do this then the text has coherence; right? One might argue that the "Right?" should be segmented into a separate statement. The investigators thought not, treating it as "emphasis".

5. Statements were sometimes classified according to a common element with another category instead of according to its own unique properties. For example, a student had noted that part of her text was "boring". The teacher responds:

> Why do you think... or what do you think could make it more interesting?

This is a question which was classified as a prescription by one rater. Both categories have a common element -- they are directives. But the prescription suggests what one ought to think or feel or do. The question asks for elaboration of a point.

6. Differences in coding were also due to problems of evolving the category characteristics as they emerged during the development of the system. This was particularly true for the explaining category. For example:

> Okay, okay, so she is the one whose name... whose name fit. I wasn't sure... maybe because... because you told about Mrs. L and not about Mrs. B... but you weren't going back... but then I figured out that it was... that the name must fit Mrs. L because...

The response seems to be describing the writer's paper. However, the response is actually explaining the reader's confusion by identifying the condition (structure of the paper) leading to an effect (confusion).

The use of the system at this point is to uncover characteristics of R:W conferencing for research purposes. Intercoder agreement levels for reader and writer response modes are adequate for this aim. The system, as mentioned, is being revised taking the above problem areas into account. More importantly, the system has helped to illuminate the flow of reader and writer response during conferencing. The ways in which this is accomplished will be elaborated on in the following sections of the paper focusing on what can be externalized by conferencing portrayal.

## What May Be Externalized by One to One Conferencing: Portrayal Explorations

How might one "portray" a reader/writer conferencing session so that participants (to begin with the teacher/reader) may get a glimpse of their own strategies and tactics, some sense of their own point of view or approach, and a sense of other possible perspectives? In this section of the report two forms of portrayal are described using illustrative material from teacher/student conferences. The key concern in these explorations is to see what aptitude and instructional variables relevant to writing accomplishment can be externalized.

### The Transcript as Portrayal

The first kind of portrayal form that the investigators tried out is the transcript of the conference. Results for one prospective elementary school teacher and one practicing first grade teacher are presented here to illustrate the possibilities and problems of this approach for externalizing and generating descriptions of aptitude and instructional variables related to writing accomplishment.

The transcript.

The conference transcript is an admittedly reductionstic and interpretative form of data on conferencing. An audiotape leaves out some of the behavior (e.g., much of the context of the conference and the nonverbal behavior) and interprets other behavior (e.g., intonation patterns). In addition, for some of the transcripts under study the teacher made the transcriptions and for others the researchers made the transcriptions.

Furthermore, no attempt was made to check transcription reliability by having a second person go over the tape or follow the transcriptions while listening to the tape.

Collecting teacher comments on their own transcriptions.

The transcript was given to the teacher (or the teacher had it in hand) along with the instruction to: "Write in comments on parts where you think another reader might misinterpret or not understand what you wrote or were trying to accomplish in the conference. Also, write in comments on parts where you yourself are not satisfied with either your own conferencing or the student's response". There was no formal training for this kind of analysis of one's own transcript nor any further prompting of teacher comments. It was clear to the investigators that more depth and complexity of "teacher thinking" could be obtained by use of retrospective reports (what people tell us about their performance after doing it) in an interview situation. However, the concern here was with "typical performance" rather than "maximum performance" and thus minimal direction was given as to what aspects of process were of interest.

The two teachers and the context.

Results of a tryout of the transcription as a "portrayal form" are presented for one elementary school teacher and one prospective elementary school teacher.

Ms Nalley was a first grade teacher in her third year of teaching She asked her students to write about "daydreams". The prewriting was not extensive. The class shared their recall of recent or memorable daydreams. Ken wrote a paper titled "Day Dream", the spelling of the title presumably copied from the board. A transcription of the paper and of Ms Nalley's conference is presented in Attachment A. Ms Nalley was not formally "trained" in conferencing. She was given a guide to "ways of responding" to student writing based on Moffett (1981, pp. 21-25) but was left on her own to use it or not. At this point in her experience at least she had not seen the "ways of responding" modeled nor was she given feedback on her own conferencing.

Ms Daniels was a prospective elementary school teacher in a field-based course in language arts instruction. She had been introduced to "conferencing" both by modeling and by provision of examples of "ways of responding" again based on Moffet's work (Moffett 1981, pp. 21-25). At this point Ms Daniels had received no direct feedback on her conferencing with children. She had received some feedback on a "class" basis in which the instructor observed the prospective teachers in class conferencing with each other and put examples up on the board to comment upon. In

addition she had received written feedback on a transcript of her conferencing with another prospective teacher.

Ms Daniels had prepared a lesson plan for a fourth grade class in which student writing took off from Rockwell's (1979) version of an old folk tale called "The Three Sillies". It is a "numskull" type of story about people who see trouble everywhere even before it appears. A farmer's daughter goes to the cellar to draw cider for her suitor and parents. She sees a hatchet stuck in an overhead beam and imagines the terror of what might happen if she marries and has a son and sends him to the cellar to draw cider and the hatchet falls on him. So she sits down and weeps with the cider barrel spigot open and cider running all over the floor. Soon she is joined by her mother and father who do the same. When the suitor comes down and finds out what is going on he laughs, pulls the hatchet out of the beam, and calls them the "three sillies". He says he will leave and if he finds three bigger sillies he will come back and marry the daughter.

Ms Daniels took the fourth grade students through much prewriting activity including having them predict what happens next as she read the story to them, introduction of other "three" stories, talk about possible endings before reading the ending in the story, and drawing and discussing illustrations for the story. The writing asignment provided options to change the ending, create a new "sillies" story, rewrite the story with a different voice or perspective (e.g., suitor as silly) or write a convincing argument concerning a moral for the story. Ms Daniels' conference is with Zona who chose to write a new ending.

Aptitude and instructional variables externalized by the comments of two teachers on their own conference transcripts.

Comments by Ms Nalley and Ms Daniels reveal what they were able to discriminate in their own conferencing with respect to what worked, what didn't work, and what may not be clear to someone else reading the transcript. One way to examine these comments in search of aptitude and instructional variables is to focus on "conditions" (i.e., characteristics of the student's text or conference "talk") which were associated with specific "events" (i.e., consequences or effects or responses o occurrences which followed). These condition-event pairings were identified by the investigators. The intent was to select for consideration those condition-event sequences in the conference or in the post conference talk about the conference that were "problematic". That is, the investigators did not list condition-event sequences which in their view reflected "successful" conferencing. In a third column, opposite each pairing, is the teacher's comment or absence of comment concerning the paired condition-event sequence.

Ms Nalley and Ken: Problematic condition-event sequences.-- Specific segments of teacher responses are referred to with arabic numerals and student responses are noted with lower case letters, both as indicated on the attachment A transcript of a conference between Ms Nalley and Ken.

| Condition | Event | Teacher Comment |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Ms Nalley asks a question in 13 out of 22 of her segmented responses | Ken gives a categorical response to all 13 of Ms Ns questions | None |
| 2. Ms Nalley initiates & focuses all 4 "episodes" beginning with lines (1,3,8,21) | Ken responds by continuing along same line | None |
| 3. Ms Nalley interprets (9 & 13) | Ken corrects teacher (h, l) | None |
| 4. Ms Nalley asks, "Did you get to finish your story?" Ken responds, "Unh-unh" meaning "No" (e) | Ms Nalley responds, "How do you feel about your story?" (7) | The story didn't seem to make sense to me. I wasn't sure it was finished |
| 5. Ken notes (i) that it is part of his plan to put Brontosaurus in his his daydream | Ms Nalley extended conferencing (8-21) is directed to getting Ken to eliminate reference to the Brontosaurus in his daydream | I wasn't sure what he was trying to say<br><br>I was wondering if he had just decided to put this in<br><br>It was hard not judging or changing it to what I think it should say |

If one examines Ms Nalley's comments concerning her own conferencing transcript (see above and bracketed comments within the transcript in Attachment A) one sees where she puts her attention, what she discriminates as changeworthy, and what she ignores. Three major condition-event relations (1,2,and 3) which the investigators saw as problematic in her conference go unnoticed or at least not commented upon by Ms Nalley: First, that most of her conference consists of questions which the student responds to categorically rather than by elaborating on or extending an idea; Second, that when the conference is divided

into "episodes" (segments focusing on one topic) there are four major episodes all of which are initiated by Ms Nalley (none by Ken); Third, that the only noncategorical responses by Ken were corrections (h,1) of Ms Nalley's interpretations of his writing. For two of the problematic situations (4 and 5) Ms Nalley did make a comment in the form of an explanation and there was an expression of discomfort with respect to a certain aspect of her own conferencing. These situations require further analysis.

It appears that most of Ms Nalley's comments concerning her conference were explanations of her conferencing behavior. Except for her final remarks, there are no observations concerning the effects of her conferencing nor any questioning of the appropriateness of her conferencing. Her major conferencing approach (asking "closed" questions) seemed directed toward clarifying what Ken wrote (partly because the spelling was difficult to decode or because she wanted to correct it) and clarifying the student's "voice" (whether he was the dinosaur in the story or himself). Ken said "I wanted to" in response to her segment "10" question: "So why did you put in 'I know a dinosaur would not like that [ice cream and cookies for dessert]'"? Ms Nalley assumed that Ken was pretending tc be a dinosaur. She began exploring this assumption, but again through closed questions (11, 12, 13) the last of which misinterpreted what Ken said. When she asks again why he put in the Brontosaurus, he simply says "I don't know". Then she proceeds through closed questions built on the assumption that dinosaurs don't fit the story, to get Ken to agree. She seemed to be operating primarily from an "ideal text" (Knoblauch and Brannon 1984; Brannon and Knoblauch 1982) which Ken's story did not fit and which it was made to fit . To her a day dream in the middle of math class about dinner with chocolate chip ice cream and cookies for dessert could not include a dinosaur. When Ms Nalley asks Ken if he got to finish his story he responds, "Unh-unh". In her comments on this part of the conference she simply explains that the story didn't make sense to her, presumably because "I wasn't sure it was finished". But when Ken indicates it is not finished she goes on to ask him how he feels about the story. She does not "listen" to Ken. Why didn't Ken finish as he views it? Where was the story going according to Ken's plans and goals? In what sense was it "not finished" according to Ken? She overinterprets, directs, and does not listen. Yet her approach makes her uncomfortable. When her comments reached the end of the transcript she expressed a concern about her conferencing; "... it is very hard not judging or changing it to what I think it should say ...." She was aware, or became aware through reading and commenting upon her conference transcript, that she had some problematic ways of responding to a student and his writing.

There seem to be two significant teacher variables that are central to this teacher's conference. First, there is the teacher's difficulty in discriminating effects of her conferencing tactics (mostly closed questions) on the student's responses (mostly categorical with an eventual "clamming up" concerning his own plans or goals in the writing or his image of the dream he was writing about). Second, there is an inability (or difficulty) in keeping herself from judging the student's work or "changing it to what I think it should say". There also seems to be one major student variable that is central to how the conference operates. The student seems unable to "take control" of his own writing; to articulate his writing intent or goals (though he makes one stab at it in his "I wanted to" response) and to effectively assert himself or take initiative in the interaction with respect to this intent (though he does correct the teacher in two other places -- his responses "h" and "l").

Ms Daniels and Zona: Problematic condition-event sequences.-- Specific segments of the teacher's responses are referred to with arabic numerals in parentheses and student responses are noted with lower case letters, both as indicated on the Attachment B transcript of a conference between Ms Daniels and Zona.

| Condition | Event | Teacher Comment |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Ms Daniels (9) asks Zona why she wasn't sure about her line 5 being understandable | Zona says "I don't know", shrugs her shoulders and then elaborates | Zona (c, f, g, i, k) answered, I don't know or shrugged her shoulders quite often. She lacked confidence and ... I might have intimidated her |
| 2. Ms Daniels asks closed questions twice (10, 22) | Zona says "Uh-huh" once and gives a short literal response the second time | I would restate my questions and get more of Zona's ideas generated into the the conversation |
| 3. Ms Daniels has completed commenting upon specifics of her conference with Zona | She notes that she would build in more choices for students if she were to do it again | These kids have a hard time with choices. They expect to be told everything to do |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 4. Ms Daniels has completed commenting upon specifics of her conference with Zona | She notes the need to get student analysis of their own writing to be more meaningful | Students have a hard time discussing their work with one another. That's something that has to be established at the beginning of the year. They don't know what to say. |
| 5. Ms Daniels tries to get Zona to explore the effect of making a sad ending instead of a happy one (24) | Zona shrugs her shoulders and says, "I wanted it to end happy" | I was asking her questions to extend her thinking... to help her realize that stories have endings that are sad ...they don't always have to be happy |

As with Ms Nalley, if one examines Ms Daniels' comments on her own conferencing one sees where she puts her attention, what she discriminates as changeworthy, and what she ignores. Five major problematic condition-event sequences are listed by the investigators and all are commented upon by Ms Daniels. First, is the situation of Zona shrugging her shoulders a lot and saying "I don't know" in response to Ms Daniels' conference talk. This was of concern to Ms Daniels and she attributes Zona's response to "lack of confidence" and/or her own effect in "intimidation" of Zona. Second, is the situation of Zona giving short answer or categorical responses to Ms Daniels' closed questions. Ms Daniels was concerned about this too and suggested modifying her questions so that they are more open. Third, is the situation of Ms Daniels reflecting upon the conference as a whole and noting that she would build in more choices for students if she were to do it again. Ms Daniels did a sort of "double-take" on her own recommendation and noted that these students "have a hard time with choices". Fourth, is the situation of Ms Daniels again reflecting on the conference as a whole and noting the need to get students to respond in a "more meaningful" way to each others' writing or their own. This too was a concern for Ms Daniels who noted that these students have a hard time knowing "what to say" and that such patterns must be "established at the beginning of the year". Finally, is the situation in which Ms Daniels unsuccessfully tries to get Zona to explore the consequences of changing the story ending from happy to sad and Zona shrugs her shoulders and indicates she is happy with it as it is. Ms Daniels does not express any direct concern here, but does "explain" why she made the suggestion -- to help Zona "realize" that stories don't always have to be happy.

Four out of five of the problematic situations noted by the investigators (1,2,3,4) were matters of independent concern by Ms Daniels. For these four condition-event sequences or situations Ms Daniels not only expressed concern, but also suggested reasonable changes in her conferencing approach, noted specific negative effects of her approach, and noted characteristics of the students which seemed to influence what appear to be less educative responses than she would like to see. For the fifth situation, Ms Daniels gives an "explanation" as to what she was trying to accomplish (since it did not get the desired effect and might be confusing to a reader) which was for Zona to "realize" that stories don't always have to be happy. As we shall see this last response missed in an important way.

There seem to be a number of significant teacher variables that are central to the problematic situations identified by the investigators in Ms Daniels' conference. First is this teacher's ability to independently recognize as problematic all of the condition-event sequences which the investigators found problematic. Second is this teacher's ability to see the "locus" of the problems in diverse places -- student confidence, student inability to "make choices" in instructional contexts, and the long term development requirements of one instructional strategy (viz., peer conferencing). Third is this teacher's difficulty in getting a student to "explore" the implications of a changed ending to a story and her difficulty in articulating an instructionally sound process for doing it or reason for doing it. The reason given was for the student to "realize" a story can have a sad ending. But the student didn't question that. She expressed a <u>preference</u> for a happy ending, not doubt that a story could have a sad ending. There is also a major student variable that is central to how the conference operates. This student exhibited considerable committment to making the "new ending" work (see the transcript), but little committment is evidenced related to exploring the possibilities of a different <u>kind</u> of ending. The comments of a "conferencing expert" on this particular conference sheds some light on why the teacher couldn't get the student to "explore" an idea and why the student didn't initiate more exploration.

<u>Expert judgment</u>.-- An "expert" in conferencing was asked to comment on Ms Daniels' transcript. The "expertness" label is based on reputation among teachers, experience as a participant and leader in writing workshops, and experience in "doing conferencing" and getting "peer conferencing" going in the classroom. The expert made two favorable comments on Ms Daniels' conference: "Ms Daniels tells why she likes the student writing (lines 4,5,6). At one point she builds toward student involvement in the dialogue (lines 16-18)." On the problematic side, the the "expert" noted: First, there is too much leading of the writer (line 10). After the student indicates

that a line of her text is not understandable and why it isn't, Ms Daniels asks "Would you like it better if ...", rather than "How would you like it better" (as she did successfully in line 16). Interestingly, Ms Daniels herself noted that she needed to rephrase that question and another one. Second, the teacher drops a hot topic after bringing up a controversy. The student wants to tell who "the lady" is at the beginnning of the story but the teacher likes "the suspense" of wanting to find out. Yet the teacher drops the topic (lines 11-13). Third, the teacher does not wait for a response from the student. There is no "wait time" for the student to respond after a teacher response. This is especially apparent in shifts from line 18 to 19, 20 to 21, 23 to 24, and 24 to 25.

The utility and disutility of isolated response analysis

As we have seen, a wide range of teacher aptitude and instructional variables have been externalized by use of the transcript as a portrayal of teacher conferencing. By having each teacher read the transcript of her own conference and comment on what worked or didn't work and what might make her intent clearer, it was possible to see what the teacher attended to. By having the investigators pick out problematic "condition-event" sequences in the transcripts, it was possible to see what the teachers missed in their own analyses. By having an "expert" comment on one of the transcripts, it was possible to see what the teacher and the investigators missed in their analyses.

A preliminary sketching out of the variables externalized by this process has been presented above. Many of the variables seem to be "aptitude complexes" in the Corno and Snow (1986, p.618) sense of a compound or special assemblage of intellectual abilities, knowledge, cognitive styles, and personality or motivational characteristics of the student or teacher relevant to performance in the specific educational context under investigation. For example, it was seen that Ms Nalley was highly directive, imposing her "ideal text" upon the student and at the end was uncomfortable about it as reflected by her comment that "It was hard not judging or changing it to what I think it should say". This smacks of a personality or motivational variable, yet one tied into some knowledge (belief, committment) that a narrative should have a particular sense of coherence. A similar connection between cognition and personality or motivation may be seen in Ms Daniels' comments. She wanted to restate her questions to get more of Zona's ideas generated into the conversation -- a teaching strategy. But the "expert" analysis notes that Ms Daniels does not wait for a response. While "waiting for a response" may be partly a teaching strategy (we have taught it to parents) it smacks also of a personality or motivational variable where the "not waiting" is tied to a belief or committment or "will" that one must

instruct, direct, use the time to help the student "realize" that things ought to be a certain way. The utility of the obtained descriptions for helping to conceptualize variables is apparent.

The disutility of the approach is in the possibilities missed. What if a more formal analysis of the transcript were presented to a teacher using the "framework" outlined in a previous section of this paper. It is possible that more variables will become apparent in a much clearer way. So the paper turns to that possibility.

## Graphic and Episodic Portrayal

The "transcript as portrayal" has yielded some descriptions of variables that have promise for further study. Yet there was a limited range of discriminations made by teachers in analyzing their transcripts. Thus a graphic and episodic description was generated to see if this approach to portrayal has the potential to yield a more specific, wider, and more comprehensive range of variables. The tryout of this approach involved all six of the transcripts at the level of a summary of data. Then two transcripts were prepared in graphic and episodic form for a response by the teacher. However, only one teacher responded. First, a summary of an analysis for all six teachers is presented and then the tryout of the graphic and episodic portrayal is presented for one teacher.

### Response Mode Analysis for Reader:Writer Responses

Frequency and percentage of use of reader response modes for six transcripts (teachers) are presented in Table 1. For each response mode used by a teacher, the frequency of writer (student) responses following that mode are listed in three categories -- categorical or short answer, elaborates or explains, and questions or corrects.

Transcript #1 represents a "prescriptive" teacher and transcript #2 represents an "open" teacher in Jacob's (1983) dissertation study. These two transcripts will be examined as benchmarks for comparison with the remaining cases we collected. Transcript #3 represents a first grade teacher with three year's experience but little training in conferencing. Transcript #4 represents an experienced eighth grade teacher who has also had experience in training teachers in writing in inservice programs at the elementary and secondary school levels. Transcript #5 represents a prospective elementary school teacher conferencing with a fifth grade student in a field based reading and language course. Transcript #6 represents an experienced seventh grade teacher who is also a drama and speech instructor.

Variation in use and effect of reader response modes is apparent in Table 1. Conferences 3 and 5 represent Ms Nalley and Ms Daniels respectively, the teachers discussed earlier. Both made most use of "questions" as a response mode, got most of their student responses following a question, and got mostly "categorical" or short answer literal responses from students rather than "elaborations" or explanations. Teachers 4 and 6 who were much more experienced than teachers 3 and 5 made more use of a wider range of response modes and were able to get many more "elaboration" responses from their students. Jacob's teacher #1 was clearly prescriptive and teacher #2 was clearly more "open" and supportive. Differences in student responding appear to be associated with teacher response in this small and heterogeneous sample. But the effects appear to be obtained in different ways.

Teachers 4 and 6, though getting similar student responding, make much different use of response modes. Teacher 4 makes little use of direct "prescriptions" and more use of "description". That there may be varying uses of response modes in conferencing that are equally effective is comforting for proponents of diversity in teaching style. Yet, the major point to be made here is that there do appear to be some regularities in effects that are testable by this sort of analysis and that one gets curious about "patterns" of response mode use.

Graphic and Episodic Portrayal

Wondering if provision of a more discriminative look at what their conferences accomplished might yield a broader range of teacher and researcher insights into variables controlling conferencing performance, the investigators selected teachers 4 and 6 for this kind of exploration. These teachers were selected because of their greater effectiveness (on current criteria) and experience. Teachers 6 was unwilling to respond to the portrayal. The response requested was indeed time consuming and the teacher's duties made responding too much of a burden. A simpler response form will be sought for future research. Nevertheless, the portrayal form for teacher 3,4,5, and 6 are presented.

The actual graphs presented to the teachers differed somewhat from these. The graphilng is based on a consensus coding that was not then available. Also, reference to the focus of response (writer or text focus) is not included in the current portrayal (because of lower reliabilities) but was in the tryout.

Table 1

Frequency and Percentage of Reader Response Modes and Frequency of Writer Response (WR) for Three Response Categories (C,E,Q) Following Specific Reader Responses for Six Conferences (C) Based on Consensus Classification of Responses Across Raters

| | | Reader Response Modes | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| C | WR | Q | P | E | S | D | M | TOTAL |
| 1 | | 1(08) | 8(62) | 1(08) | 1(08) | 1(08) | 1(08) | |
| | C | 1 | 2 | 1 | -- | -- | -- | 4(80) |
| | E | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | ----- |
| | Q | -- | 1 | -- | -- | -- | -- | 1(20) |
| 2 | | 3(20) | 4(27) | 3(20) | 5(33) | -- | -- | |
| | C | 2 | 1 | 1 | -- | -- | -- | 4(40) |
| | E | -- | -- | 2 | 3 | -- | -- | 5(50) |
| | Q | -- | 1 | -- | -- | -- | -- | 1(10) |
| 3 | | 13(59) | 3(14) | -- | 3(14) | 2(09) | 1(05) | |
| | C | 13 | 2 | -- | -- | 1 | 1 | 17(94) |
| | E | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | ------ |
| | Q | -- | -- | -- | -- | 1 | -- | 1(06) |
| 4 | | 11(24) | 4(09) | 6(13) | 13(28) | 9(20) | 3(07) | |
| | C | 5 | -- | 1 | -- | 2 | 2 | 10(33) |
| | E | 6 | 1 | -- | 7 | 1 | -- | 15(50) |
| | Q | -- | -- | 4 | -- | 1 | -- | 5(17) |
| 5 | | 13(42) | -- | 9(29) | 8(26) | 1(04) | -- | |
| | C | 6 | -- | 1 | -- | -- | -- | 7(58) |
| | E | 4 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 4(33) |
| | Q | 1 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 1(08) |
| 6 | | 12(26) | 12(26) | 5(11) | 12(26) | 4(09) | 2(04) | |
| | C | 2 | 1 | 1 | -- | 3 | 1 | 8(44) |
| | E | 10 | 1 | -- | -- | 1 | -- | 10(56) |
| | Q | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | ----- |

* Read table as follows: For conference # 4, the teacher used Questions 11 times (24%), Prescriptions 4 times (9%), Explanations 6 times (13%), Supports 13 times (28%), Describes 9 times (20%), and Manages 3 times (7%). The "Associates" response, not on the table, was not used by any of the teachers. Also, in conference # 4, under each teacher response mode is the frequency of writer responses that followed teacher responses of that mode. C = categorical, E = elaboration, and Q = questions or corrects.

Procedures and results of a tryout for teacher 4.-- The graphic and episodic portrayal of the conference of teacher four was submitted to her. She was asked to respond to a series of questions referring as necessary to the graph and the transcript of her conference. The teacher's written response to the instructions and follow up conversation is summarized here organized according to the sequence of directions given to her.

Comment on what particularly satisfies and disturbs you with respect to your frequency of use of each kind of response mode.

Observation. I made no "association" responses; i.e., remarks that tell about my personal experience related to the student's text or writing process. Comment. This is disturbing because I have heard that students learn more from people they know well and sharing my experiences might bridge that gap in getting to know the student. NOTE: The investigators included this category because of its frequent use by C.S. Lewis in his letters to children (Dorsett and Mead, 1985).

Observation. My "prescribing" responses are low and so are "manages/orients" responses. Comment. This is satisfying because I like to be in charge but I know that writers need to be in charge of their own writing.

Observation. My use of supporting, describing, and questioning was reasonably high. Comment. This is satisfying because the way I use questioning "to clarify" is a positive thing and supporting and describing leave decisions on change or addition and deletion to the writer.

Comment on the nature of student/writer responses that follow each of your "response modes".

Observation. There are a lot of categorical responses by the student. Comment. This is probably acceptable in a beginning conference. Later on in the year, I hope for a substantial number of elaboration responses by the student. Also, it depends on the focus of the conference. I didn't have to deal with text structure for this student. But when I do, there may be longer statements by me and if I am understood, shorter statements by the student until a shared understanding is developed. Whether elaboration responses by the student should come after supportive or describing responses or somewhere else is something I don't know enough about. Probably it does not matter.

Comment on the percentage of conference "talk" that the student engaged in as compared to the percentage of teacher talk.

Observation. On the basis of the segments defined by the analysis, the student made 39% of all segmented responses. Comment. I would like to see more responding by the student. The author ought to be in charge, both in explaining and in making decisions as to what needs to be done. Yet, the actual percentage depends much on student personality.

Comment on the "flow" of your conference as represented in the graphic portrayal.

Observation. I focused much on "other teachers" and unnecessary prescriptions. Comment. The conference is "rough". It should grow more out of the student's ideas. I am uncomfortable with it. I would leave out my pursuit of who the teachers are. I would alsoleave out prescriptions 15 and 17. I can give structure and information and details to visualize, but they should grow out of the student's ideas. Also, my concern should be, "does reading the writing sound like the student's "voice"?

The Researcher's Analysis.-- The analysis by Ms Jay of her conference (#4) reflects something of the complexity and "context dependency" of rules of conferencing. "Categorical" responses by a student (yes/no or short answer) and the percentage of student talk in a conference may generally reflect the student not being in control. But as Ms Jay notes, the appropriateness of such student responding depends on the context, the student's personality, the development of the teacher/student conferencing relationship over time, and the kind of focus of the conference. A look back at several of the conferences suggests that it is not unusual for teachers to get into "traps". This was apparent with Ms Nalley (cf her discomfort concerning changing the text to say what she wanted it to), and Ms Daniels (cf her discomfort concerning not getting the student's ideas into the conversation). It is so also with Ms Jay who saw her conference as "rough" and though experienced was "uncomfortable" with it and would have done some things differently. Mastery of conferencing probably requires long term development. In conversations with these teachers, that concern was repeatedly voiced. Ms Nalley noted how it took a couple of months to get students working independently and assuming responsibility in peer dialogue so that she could move around and coach and consult. Ms Jay noted how little time there was for conferencing. In her case she is working to change this by arranging instruction with colleagues in a kind of team teaching in which there are large classes for jointly worked out activity, freeing other teachers in the group to work with small groups and one-on-one. Also, she is arranging for students to go to some independent work setting (library,

reading room, computer room) when work is done making the small group even smaller. Ms Sands simply has given up conferencing and gives mostly written feedback waiting for the rearrangement of school schedules to make a difference in her class size.

An exploratory analysis of patterns of conferencing revealed by the graphic portrayals yields some promising leads to specification of variables (See Table 2). Conferences were divided into three groups on the basis of the percentage of student elaboration responses and questions or corrections of the teacher (as opposed to categorical or literal short answers). This was taken as a crude index of "student control" of their own writing -- one of the goals of writing instruction. When one looks at teacher "shifts" from one response mode to another in the conference, the conferences with "high student control" were also those with the highest percentage of shifts. This virtuousity or flexibility may be a critical characteristic of good conferencing. But as noted earlier, the more significant observation is that some regularities in patterns are revealed by the graphic portrayal and testable in future studies.

Table 2

Percent of Teacher "Shifts" from one Response Mode to Another According to Conference Rankings on a "Student Control" Index Consisting of Percent of Student Responses That are "Categorical" or Short Answer Literal Responses as Opposed to Elaborations, Explanations, Questions, or Corrections

| Conferences | Average % of Categorical Student Responses | Percent of "Shifts" |
|---|---|---|
| 2, 4, 6 | 39% | 71% |
| 1, 5 | 69% | 54% |
| 3 | 94% | 36% |

This crude index of "student control" of their own writing was contested by our "expert" conferencer. A "concept map" of conferencing was presented to this teacher expert for her comments on how well it represented her perspective on conferencing. The map was drafted based on interviews with this teacher and several other teachers using procedures based on the work of Novak and Gowin (1984) and McClintock (1987). It will not be discussed in detail here. However, the map consists of a set of "principles of conferencing" that are presumed to "guide activities" of three agents: peers, the writer himself or

herself, and the teacher. The activities are listed and specific outcomes that the activities are presumed to influence are specified. Finally, the entire process is presumed to result in what is called "authentic authoring". When the "expert" got to the "authentic authoring" as a final outcome or goal, she elaborated on the meaning of the term from her perspective. She said it was more than a high frequency of student elaborative or explaining responses such as obtained by her and Ms Sands. As she put it, much more is involved including: The students' will to pursue their own intent for writing, the students' "will" to risk exposing themselves to vulnerability from feedback obtained by asking for comments on specific features and effects of their writing where it does not do "what I would like it to", the students' confidence to say one's writing does not work but willingness to pursue trying to make it work, and the students' ability to discriminate what works and what does not. Such a variable has similarities to what accomplished poets say about their own writing process (Della-Piana, 1978). If "authentic authoring" could be operationalized along these lines one would have one of the compound "cognitive-volitional" variables which Corno and Snow (1986) call an "aptitude complex" worthy of investigation.

## Implications for Further Research

Our analysis of one-to-one conferencing between teacher and student focusing on a draft of the student's writing has been found to externalize a number of variables that are elements of conferencing performance and that constitute or influence writing accomplishment or instruction. Some of the variables warrant further investigation.

The kind of study we envision is not easy to bring about but would likely be worth the cost and effort. We would use nomination and interviews to select about 60 to 100 teachers who had received training in conferencing, practiced it regularly for at least two years, and are beginning to articulate their own "theory of conferencing". We would collect audiotapes of their conferences with one student about midyear. The conferences would be analyzed for evidence of "authentic authoring" by students with criteria derived from our "expert" specification noted above. Then the conferences would be submitted to a median split (high/low authentic authoring) and randomly divided into two subgroups within the high and low groups. One subset would be analyzed for evidence of patterns of response associated with authentic authoring and then the other subset would be used for cross-validation. We would expect varying patterns of teacher response modes to be equally associated with "authentic authoring" by students. However, we would follow up the leads obtained in the current study. We would graphically portray each teacher's conference and ask them to note what worked for them

and why and what did not work and why. We would see if this ability to recognize productive and "changeworthy" performance in their own conferencing was associated with "authentic authoring" by students. We would look to see how much was externalized in the conferences that is represented in the comprehensive specification of "classroom writing contexts" as outlined by Rosenthal (1983). This too would be analyzed as it related to "authentic authoring". Finally, we would speculate on the educative value for students and teachers of this kind of assessment and would try to conceptualize how the information yield from this kind of assessment complements the information yielded by indirect assessment of writing and direct product assessment. We would not want to go much further in our planning until we were at least immersed in such a study.

ATTACHMENT A

Ms Nalley and Ken
Segmented Conferencing Transcript

NOTE: Numbers refer to Ms Nalley and letters to Ken. Comments in brackets are Ms Nalley's observations upon reading the typed transcript of the session.

Assignment: Writing About "Day Dreams"

1. Why don't you reac us your story K.

a. (reads) "I wunts had a Day Drem it was dinr I will tell you it Mmm ok in the mitll of math I had it and it was yumy I Day Dremed of coclit chip iscrinm and cookys for dsrt and ris for dinr I no a Dinosaurs wood not like that aseshle a Brontosaurs and I thot that I was going to have my fravit casrll that day Drim"

2. Okay. That's a good story K. Okay.

3. (Reads) "I once had a day dream. It was..." Can you tell me what it was? (Points to the word "dinr")

b. "...dinner" [I wasn't sure what the word was]

4. (reads) "I will tell you it Mmm ok in the mitll of Math I had it and it was yumy I Day Dremed of coclit chip Iscrinm and cookys for dsrt and rice for dinr I no a Dinosaurs wood not like that..." What's this? (Pointing to the next word, "aseshle")

c. Especially

5. Okay. "...a Brontosaurus and I thot that I was going to have my fravit casrll that day " Is that the end of the sentence? (This is said at this point although the word "Drm" follows "day")

d. Yah.

6. Did you get to finish your story? [The story didn't seem to make sense to me. I wasn't sure it was finished]

e. Unh-unh.

7. How do you feel about your story?

f. Pretty good.

Ms Nalley & Ken (continued)

8. Okay, right here (pointing back to the beginning of the story). You were sitting in math class right? [I was trying to see why he put in anything about a Dinosaur]

g. M-hm

9. And you were dreaming about having ice cream and cookies for dinner.

h. No, for dessert.

10. Okay. So why did you put in "I know a dinosaur would not like that, especially a Brontosaurus"?

i. I wanted to. [I thought maybe he was pretending to be a dinosaur]

11. Okay, were you daydreaming about a dinosaur having...

j. M-hm.

12. So it was your daydream or a dinosaur's daydream? [I wasn't sure what she was trying to say]

k. Mine.

13. Okay, so were you a dinosaur?

l. No.

14. So why did you stick in "... a dinosaur would not like that especially a Brontosaurus"? [I knew a lot of kids had been asking how to spell different Dinosaurs names. And I was wondering if she had just decided to put this in.]

m. I don't know.

15. Is that going along with your daydream or did you just decide to stick it in there?

n. I decided to stick it in there.

16. Does it have anything to do with the rest of the story then?

o. No.

17. Would you have to put it in there?

Ms Nalley & Ken (continued)

p. No.

18. Okay, how could you change that so it was just about your dinner?

q. Take out the dinosaurs.

19. Okay...good job. Okay.

20. So we'll leave this part out maybe (circles "Dinosaurs wood not like that aseshle a Brontosaurs")

21. and maybe you can write another story. Maybe the next time you write a story you can write about the dinosaur.

r. M-hm.

22. Okay. Good job.

[I want the students to feel their story is good, but it is very hard not judging or changing it to what I think it should say ... I might have responded differently if ... hadn't been there]

ATTACHMENT B

Conference transcript for Ms Daniels and Zona (a fifth grade student).

Assignment: Writing options based on story of The Three Sillies.

Numbered statements are Ms D and lettered statements are Zona

1 O.K. Zona, what option did you choose to do?

2 Did you choose to write more sillies?

3 Is that what you did?

a No, I chose to write a new ending. (Zona's paper is transcribed below)

1 He serched for five years but could only find
2 two sillie situtuation. But one day he went to
3 a house. It was a pink house. He knoked on the
4 door and a beutiful lady ansewed the door.
5 Oh, you'v come back. I didn't think you would.
6 Are you one of the sillies I use to know? "yes".
7 She said bout the apple cider? "yes". So he
8 decided not to look for more sillies and he married
9 her.
The End

4 I like the way you start, "that he searched for five years"

5 because that captured my attention and

6 made me wonder, "Wow, in five years he was still searching?"

7 It made me want to read on and find out what happened.

8 It's suspenseful to me here where you say he went to a pink house and a beautiful lady answered the door. (lines 3,4) Because at first I thought he was going to fall in love with someone else, and I felt bad for his sillie left at home.

b Uh huh

9 Why did you mark that you weren't sure about this, or that it wouldn't be understandable? (line 5)

c Um ... I don't know, I just ... I don't know ... It doesn't tell who the lady was ... so ...

Ms Daniels & Zona (continued)

10 Would you like it better if you had explained who the lady was?

d Uh huh

11 Isn't that interesting" That's what I liked about it. That it didn't tell who she was ...

12 it made me want to read on and find out if he fell in love with someone else ...

13 o.k. and then they got married.

14 Why did you put that you didn't like this part ... "But one day he went to a house"? (lines 2,3)

e It's kind of boring ... that he went to a house.

15 Why do you think ... or what do you think could make it more interesting?

f I don't know.

16 Can you think of something that you would be more happy with there?

g Maybe that he was just looking for somewhere to stay or something? I don't know.

17 Why would you have him doing that?

h It gives him something to do ... or a reason to be knocking on a door.

18 That's a good idea ... I hadn't even thought about that ...

19 But that gives him some direction instead of having him haphazardly knocking on the door....

20 I especially like your ending ...

21 it caught me by surprise ...

22 I didn't think he'd marry her without finding one more sillie.

23 What do you like best about your story?

i I don't know.

Ms Daniels & Zona (continued)

24 Do you have a favorite part ... or something you're really pleased with here?

J Not really ... um ... maybe the surprise that he knocked on the door of the sillie he left five years ago.

25 That was an imaginative choice for a new ending.

26 What if you chose to make the ending sad instead of happy? How would that change your story?

k (Shrugs her shoulders) I wanted it to end happy.

27 If you had more time to write, what would you add to this?

1 Nothing.

28 O.K. Zona, thanks for sharing that with me.

29 I liked your story ...

30 because it's got a surprise element and you use nice descriptive words ... pink, beautiful, etc.

31 Thank you Zona.

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